

Blast from the Past

Did you know?

The Beatles' *I Want To Hold Your Hand* was the top-selling single in Australia in 1963

A tale of *three* bridges



STORY KYLIE KNIGHT

THE construction of three vital transport links in the region united communities and boosted visitor numbers, but each faced obstacles to get off the ground.

AJ WYLLIE BRIDGE

THE original bridge across the North Pine River opened in 1877 in a bid to provide a more reliable crossing for the community following the construction of the first school-house and police residence and lock-up.

It replaced a ford across the river which was impassable after heavy rain.

The bridge, later known as Sir Arthur's Bridge, named after Governor Sir Arthur Kennedy who was present at the opening, was 320 feet long in eight spans of 40 feet and 18 feet wide.

It was made largely from ironbark and spotted gum.

The area was prone to flooding after heavy rain and, just 11 years later, the bridge needed serious work.

Some members of the Redcliffe Divisional Board

wanted to replace the bridge, instead of repairing the old one. A motion was carried on October 2 but that motion was rescinded on December 4.

The Pine Divisional Board was requested to invite tenders for the work and a combined meeting of the two boards was held on March 5, 1889 to discuss tenders. A tender from Edward Clarke for 599.15.0 (pounds) was accepted. The government, Pine and Redcliffe Divisional Boards bore the cost.

The bridge was damaged again during a flood in 1893 and rebuilt three years later.

Plans were again drawn up for a new bridge in December 1934, with construction starting in 1935 and this incarnation of the bridge was named AJ Wyllie Bridge after pioneer Alexander Jackson Wyllie.

He was born in Scotland in 1854 and came to Queensland at the age of nine years and lived at South Pine with his family until the early 1880s, when he moved to North Pine (now Petrie) and married Margaret Amelia Cameron in 1883.

His property was located on either side of the main northern railway line.

He was devoted to the North Pine Presbyterian Church of which he was an elder and Sunday school superintendent for 51 years.

Mr Wyllie was a member of the Caboolture Divisional Board and later a member of Redcliffe Shire Council for many years, serving as Chairman on several occasions.

He was a foundation member of North Pine School of Arts and died in 1934. Construction of the higher bridge, which was built on the downstream side of the old bridge, commenced in 1987.

It was necessary when Gympie Road was widened

to accommodate a four-lane carriageway. In 1988, the bridges were jointly named the A.J. Wyllie Bridge

The bridge was again significantly damaged during the 2011 floods. It was rebuilt 1.4m higher than the existing structure to make it more immune to flooding and reopened to traffic in late 2012.

Sources: Moreton Bay Regional Council Local History archives and North Pine Heritage Trail document.

BRIEBIE ISLAND BRIDGE

THE idea for a bridge was first hatched in 1937 after the completion of the Hornibrook Highway from Brighton to Clontarf, on the Redcliffe peninsula.

The SS Koopa had provided transport to Bribie Island from the mainland for many years before being discontinued and replaced by a vehicle ferry. It relied

on good weather.

In 1955, the government considered a proposal to build a bridge but did not pursue it because of local opposition.

Member for Bribie and then Leader of the Opposition Frank Nicklin promised to build a bridge, if he was returned to office in the 1950s, and the idea gained increased publicity from 1957-59.

On November 17, 1959, it was announced that a bridge would be built.

The bridge was officially opened on October 19, 1963 and became the longest complete pre-stressed concrete bridge in Australia.

The toll was five shillings each way and it took 12 years to pay for the bridge at which point the toll was removed.



1. Bridge over the North Pine River shortly after it was opened in 1936; construction in 1987. Images courtesy of Moreton Bay Regional Council, reference number [PRLPC-P0704 and PRLPC-P0979/3]. 2. The Hornibrook Bridge. Images courtesy of Moreton Bay Regional Council, reference number [RMPC-100\100630]. 3. The Bribie Island Bridge in 1963 and during construction. Images courtesy of Moreton Bay Regional Council, reference number [CLPC-P1652 and CLPC-P2533].

Sources: Bribie Island Bridge Silver Anniversary book (1988) and Moreton Bay Regional Council Local History Archives.

HORNIBROOK HIGHWAY

A PROPOSAL to build a bridge from Brighton to the Redcliffe peninsula faced many obstacles including finance, design and timber supply before it opened on October 4, 1935.

It took more than three years to build as a private enterprise with Hornibrook carrying the financial and emotion worry of such a big project during particularly tough financial times.

Another problem was securing the large amount of ironbark timber needed for the corbels, girders and decking on the bridge within 15 months.

The viaduct consists of 290, 30 feet spans, two 28 feet six-inch spans and two 24 feet six inch spans, with the total length between the bridge portals of 8806 lineal feet.

Sources: A Tale of Two Bridges and Moreton Bay Regional Council Local History archives.